

Message Text

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ORIGIN HEW-06

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APPROVED BY OES/ENP/EN: WJWALSH, III

DHEW/PHS/OASH/OIH: RFISCHER

EUR/WE:JDOBBINS

EUR/CE:SKLINGAMAN

EUR/NE:SWORREL

EUR/CE JHURLEY,JR

EUR/NE:DGOOD AN

EUR/SOV:WEDGAR

EUR/EE:JSEYMOUR,JR

ARA/MEX:DSIMCOX

ARA/ECA:NBOUTON

AF/S:JTAYLOR

EA/ANP:TWAJDA

EA/ANP:WGALLAGHER

EA/J:EFEATHERSTONE

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BERN PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY WARSAW PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MEXICO PRIORITY

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AMEMBASSY PRETORIA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY WELLINGTON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY TOKYO PRIORITY

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EIND, SWEL, TBIO, XX

SUBJECT: INTERNATIONAL FOOD LABELING SURVEY

1. FDA REQUESTS ASSISTANCE OF NAMED POSTS IN PERFORMING A SURVEY OF TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED NATIONS REGARDING THEIR LAWS, REGULATIONS, PRACTICES AND OTHER RELATED INFORMATION BEARING UPON CARBOHYDRATE LABELING.

2. THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION OF THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE IS UNDERTAKING A COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF FOOD LABELING AND THE LAWS AND REGULATIONS WHICH GOVERN SUCH LABELING. THE PURPOSE IS THREE-FOLD: (1) TO IMPROVE PROVISION OF INFORMATION TO CONSUMERS WHICH RELATES SPECIFICALLY TO HEALTH, E.G., SODIUM AND CHOLESTEROL LABELING; (2) TO RESPOND TO CONSUMER DESIRES TO BETTER DESCRIBE THE INGREDIENTS OF PROCESSED FOODS; AND (3) TO IMPROVE THE MANNER OF PRESENTATION OF INFORMATION TO CONSUMERS I.E., IMPROVE THE FOOD LABEL AS A COMMUNICATION DEVICE.

3. THE PURPOSE OF THIS INQUIRY IS CONFINED TO ONE AREA, I.E., CARBOHYDRATE LABELING. THE MATTER OF "SUGAR" LABELING IS VERY MUCH IN THE PUBLIC ARENA IN THE UNITED STATES AT PRESENT. IT IS A CONTROVERSIAL SUBJECT, BOTH AS RELATED TO

HEALTH ISSUES AND TO CONSUMER RIGHT-TO-KNOW ISSUES. CURRENTLY, OUR REGULATIONS PROVIDE FOR DECLARATION OF UNCLASSIFIED

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GRAMS OF DIGESTIBLE CARBOHYDRATES PER SERVING AS PART OF NUTRITION LABELS (VOLUNTARY EXCEPT WHEN NUTRIENTS ARE ADDED OR NUTRITION CLAIMS ARE MADE) AND FOR NON-QUANTITATIVE IDENTIFICATION OF INGREDIENTS IN DESCENDING ORDER OF PREDOMINANCE (EXCEPT WHEN THE INGREDIENT IS MANDATORY IN A STANDARDIZED FOOD). IN ADDITION, VOLUNTARY QUANTITATIVE DECLARATION OF THE CONTENT OF TOTAL COMPLEX CARBOHYDRATES AND TOTAL SUGARS IS WIDELY PRACTICED BY OUR BREAKFAST CEREAL INDUSTRY. FEW HEALTH CLAIMS ARE PERMITTED BY OUR REGULATIONS.

4. FDA THEREFORE, WOULD BE VERY MUCH INTERESTED IN LEARNING THE APPROACHES TO THESE MATTERS BEING TAKEN BY OTHER TECHNOLOGICALLY ADVANCED NATIONS. HENCE, FDA WOULD BE MOST GRATEFUL TO RECEIVE INFORMATION FROM YOU CONCERNING (COUNTRY) LAWS, REGULATIONS, OR OTHER LEGALLY ENFORCEABLE PRACTICES BEARING ON CARBOHYDRATE LABELING. SPECIFIC SUBJECT AREAS OF PARTICULAR INTEREST INCLUDE:

(1) QUANTITATIVE DECLARATION OF CARBOHYDRATES, SUCROSE, OTHER SUGARS, OR SUGAR ALCOHOLS: IF QUANTITATIVELY DECLARED IS IT IN TERMS OF INGREDIENTS AS ADDED OR IS IT EXPRESSED

IN TOTAL SUGARS OR OTHER CARBOHYDRATE CONTENT IN THE FINISHED FOOD? HOW ARE QUANTITIES EXPRESSED, I.E., GRAMS, PERCENT BY WEIGHT, PERCENT OF CALORIES PER SERVING, CALORIES PER 100 CALORIES, ETC.?

(2) NON QUANTITATIVE DECLARATION OF THE SAME TYPES OF INGREDIENTS.

(3) PERMITTED OR SPECIFIED HEALTH CLAIMS, E.G., RELATIVE TO DIABETES MELLITUS OR DENTAL CARIES.

(4) SIMILAR LABELING APPROACHES TO OTHER MACRO NUTRIENTS, I.E., PROTEIN OR FATS.

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5. ANY ASSISTANCE POSTS CAN PROVIDE IN SECURING THE REQUESTED INFORMATION WILL BE SINCERELY APPRECIATED. CHRISTOPHER

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